

is the first of its kind in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) how far would this ensure accurate signalling and telecommunication to control rail accidents; and

(d) the action plan of Government to install similar system on other divisions of the East Coast Railway?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. The upgradation and modernization of Railway signalling system in Sambalpur division is still under progress and it is not the first of its kind in the country.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Provision/Upgradation of Signalling and Telecommunication systems are effective, wherever these are provided, in reducing rail accidents, specially those which are on account of mistakes being made by station staff. Sambalpur division has fully transferred train control circuits to Optical Fibre medium which ensures better reliability and good quality.

(d) Advanced Signalling Systems are progressively being provided on all Divisions of Indian Railways. Panel Interlocking, Electronic Interlocking, Route Relay interlocking, Block proving by axle counter and Intermediate Block Signalling have already been sanctioned on East Coast Railway, as per policy, and the works are progressing.

Rail accidents

1918. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of train accidents which occurred in the country during 2006;

(b) the number of persons killed and injured as a result thereof, alongwith loss of properties suffered, accident-wise;

(c) the compensation/*ex-gratia* relief paid to the relatives of those killed and to the injured, accident-wise;

(d) the *prima facie* cause of each accident indicating whether inquiries, so far, conducted by Railways to ascertain exact cause of such accidents;

(e) if so, the details and outcome thereof and the action taken thereon, accident-wise; and

(f) what steps taken/being taken by the Railways to avert such accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (e) There have been 196 consequential train accidents on Indian Railways during the period from January, 2006 to November, 2006, in which 162* persons lost their lives and 235* sustained injuries. Loss of railway property on account of these accidents has been estimated to be Rs. 24,31,66,860*. A sum of Rs. 3,98,500/-* as *ex-gratia* has been paid in cases where admissible. Compensation, however, shall be payable after the claim cases are filed and awarded by the Claim Tribunals. However, Rs. 8,23,640/- has been paid to the two railway employees under 'Workmen Compensation Act'. Further, Rs. 1,70,000/- have been paid as relief money on humanitarian ground as a special case in the unmanned level crossing accident of Southern Railway which took place on 31.10.2006.

Out of these 196 accidents, 15 cases are being enquired into by the respective Commissioners of Railways Safety and in case of remaining 181, departmental enquiry committees were constituted. Depending on finding of the enquiry reports, so far finalized in 161 cases, action as warranted is in progress including punitive action under Discipline and Appeal Rules against those found responsible. Accident wise details are at Annexure [See Appendix 209 Annexure No. 3].

(f) All possible steps are undertaken on a continuing basis to prevent accidents. These measures include timely replacement of over aged assets, adoption of suitable technologies for upgradation and maintenance of track, rolling stock, signaling and interlocking systems, safety drives and inspections at regular intervals to monitor and educate staff for observance of safe practices. As a result, there has been a declining trend in the number of accidents from 473 in 2000-01 to 234 in 2005-06. In the current financial year, from April to November 2006, the number of consequential train accidents has been 144 as against 169 during the corresponding period of last year.

*Figures are provisional.